

Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of the Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday 2 July 2026.

Present: Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Chair), Cllr Katie Zagoria (Vice-Chair), Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Alan Watson

Officers: Phil Hardie, Simon Milner (CS,E&C); Corinne Moore, Natalie Sargeant, Gary Woods (CS)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr Jason French, Cllr Shakeel Hussain

CSS/17/26 Livestreaming

The Chair announced to those present that the meeting would be livestreamed.

CSS/18/26 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CSS/19/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CSS/20/26 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Community Safety Select Committee meeting which was held on 28 May 2026 for approval and signature.

AGREED that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 28 May 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CSS/21/26 Scrutiny Review of Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget

The third evidence-gathering session for the Committee's review of Community Participation Budget (CPB) and Ward Transport Budget (WTB) considered a submission from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Digital Services and Systems department regarding a new, streamlined process for submitting CPB and WTB requests. Presented by the SBC Customer Development Lead, information covered the following:

- Online form introduction: A new online form had been designed to provide a consistent way of submitting new WTB requests. The form gathered the details needed to help assess proposals more effectively, reducing the need for follow-up emails seeking further information. Requests were securely recorded and managed by SBC officers through a single end-to-end process, improving the

management and tracking of proposed schemes from submission through to outcome.

- Where to access the online form: The form would be easily accessible in the Members area of the SBC intranet.
- Online form – introduction page: The introduction page explained the purpose of the form and what information would be needed before submission. The page used the same look and feel as other Council online forms, thereby providing a familiar experience.
- Reporting new issues: The form enabled the submission of new issues for investigation. To avoid duplication, Members only needed to state each issue once.
- Issues within your ward: The online form was intended for reporting issues within a Member's ward boundary. Issues outside a ward could easily be raised by the relevant Member.
- Ward Member agreement: Where a ward had multiple Members, requests should be agreed by all Members before submission to prevent any potential delays.
- Providing issue information: Providing detailed information helped the request to be assessed more efficiently. Members could include features like 'what is happening', 'how often', 'who is affected' and 'where it is located'?
- Resolving the issue: Members should share any ideas or suggestions they might have for resolving the issue. Suggestions were optional and would be considered as part of the assessment process.
- Uploading evidence: Members could easily upload files they think were relevant, such as photos of the affected site or location. Photos, documents or correspondence could help provide additional context.
- Final check before submitting: An easy-to-follow 'Check your answers' page allowed Members to review their answers before submission. Members could return to any section to update information if needed.
- Confirmation: Members would receive instant confirmation that their request had been successfully submitted. A unique reference number was provided to help track the request, and a confirmation email was automatically sent for a Member's records.
- What happens next?: Requests were securely transferred into the Council's case management system. All details and supporting evidence were stored together in one place – this helped officers assess, track and manage requests efficiently.

Thanking officers for the information provided, the Committee felt that further thought was needed around the requirement for all Members within a split ward to be in agreement on a submission, noting that some wards were represented by Councillors from different political parties who may not be willing / feel able to share proposals. SBC officers responded by stating that each ward had a single budget and that this requirement was simply asking if all Members within that ward were aware of the

proposals. Assurance was also given that the second phase of this new digital development would allow Members to view progress of requests and check available budget balances.

Reflecting on the existing CPB / WTB submission process, the Committee asked whether the new digital platform would mean Members relying on the online system for updates rather than the current arrangement which involved communication with the sole SBC officer who was responsible for processing proposals. It was confirmed that digital developments would not replace the option for contact with officers, but that the system (which enabled information to be shared and received at any time of the day) should be the primary means of communicating.

In response to a subsequent query on whether the new platform would increase the workload of the responsible officer (who, it was felt, already had too much to deal with) and cause an added layer of bureaucracy, Members were informed that the online submission / tracking of proposals aimed to strengthen the efficiency and timeliness of decision-making and the implementation of projects, as well as the communication of these potential / successful schemes. It was also stated that an additional SBC staff member was now supporting the main officer in relation to CPB and WTB applications, and that, moving forward, a shared inbox for correspondence was being introduced to provide resilience in picking-up queries.

Committee comments concluded with Members welcoming sight of their budgets (including what had been spent / what was left) as part of this new development and acknowledging the benefits of this new system.

TOWN / PARISH COUNCIL SURVEY

Anonymised feedback received in relation to the now closed Town and Parish Council survey was tabled for information. There had been six responses, though two of these appeared to be from the same Council – it was subsequently agreed to extend the survey deadline to Friday 17 July 2026 to provide an opportunity for further views to be submitted.

Discussion ensued on how much more information local Town and Parish Councils could provide over and above SBC Ward Councillors given many of the latter were also Town and Parish Councillors. It was noted that some of the respondents had indicated that they were not aware of the CPB and WTB.

LOCAL RESIDENT SURVEY

Quantitative feedback received thus far in relation to the previously issued Local Resident survey was tabled for information (it was noted that the survey deadline was tomorrow (Friday 3 July 2026)). As of 17 June 2026, there had been 94 responses – all feedback (including the qualitative information submitted in relation to the three free-text questions) would be circulated to the Committee prior to the informal 'summary of evidence' session in late-July 2026.

Reflecting on the data provided, the Committee felt there was a clear need for SBC to strengthen communication of these budget schemes to the public, with Members providing examples of how they as Ward Councillors engaged local residents in proposed projects (e.g. letters seeking views, newsletter updates). Officers emphasised the need for residents to understand that these were Member-led

schemes rather than Council-led interventions, and that the public recognise that these projects arise from Members listening to the community.

SCOPE AND PROJECT PLAN

Following agreement by the Committee that formal evidence-gathering for the CPB and WTB review had now been completed, a summary of all the information received (including any additional responses to the extended Town and Parish Council survey) would be collated and presented to the next Committee meeting in late-July 2026 (where Members would also discuss and agree draft recommendations).

AGREED that:

- 1) the information submitted by the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Digital Services and Systems department be noted.
- 2) the deadline for responses to the Committee's survey for Town and Parish Councils be extended by two weeks (to Friday 17 July 2026).

CSS/22/26 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair had no further updates.

WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2027

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme. The next meeting was due to take place on 30 July 2026, with Members informed that this would be split between formal business (to receive and approve the draft scope and plan of the Committee's next in-depth review of Alley Gates) and a subsequent informal session to go through a summary of the evidence collected as part of the ongoing Community Participation Budget and Ward Transport Budget review.

AGREED that the Chair's Update and Community Safety Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027 be noted.

Chair: